



THE FALL OF METROPOLIS!

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SUPERMAN

IN ACTION COMICS

DOUBLE-SIZED
ANNIVERSARY
BLOW-OUT!



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BY
STERN,
GUICE,
RODIER,
SWAN &
ANDERSON



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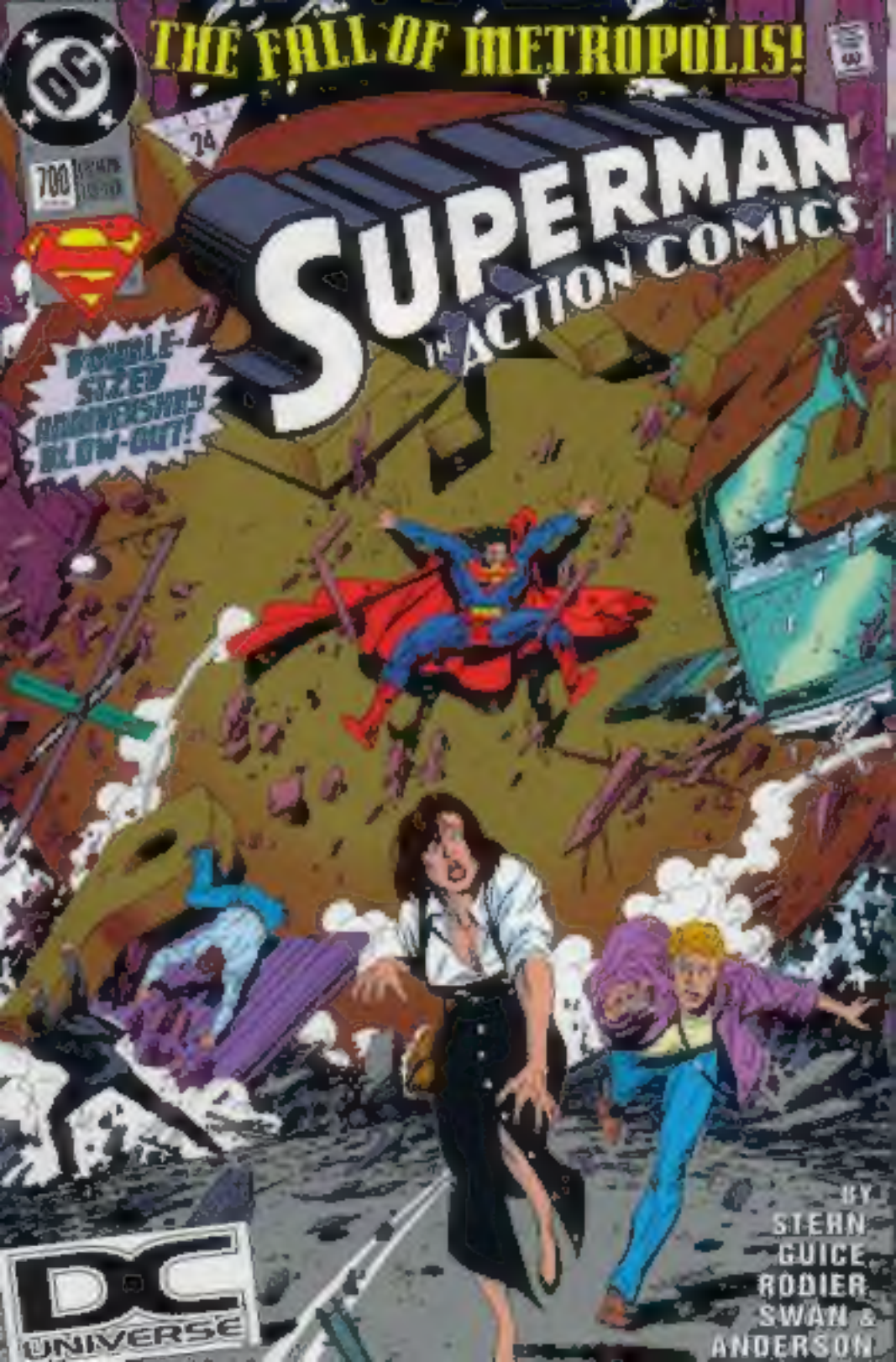


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SUPERMAN

IN ACTION COMICS

**DOUBLE-SIZED
ANNIVERSARY
BLOW-OUT!**



DC
UNIVERSE

BY
STERN
GUICE
RODIER
SWAN &
ANDERSON



WHEN I STARTED
INVESTIGATING CORRUPTION
AT LEXCORP, I
FOUND MORE THAN I'D
BARGAINED FOR.

I DISCOVERED
THAT THE "LATE" LEX
LUTHOR IS STILL
ALIVE--MASQUERADING
AS HIS OWN SON, LEX
THE SECOND--

--THAT HE TRIED
TO KILL HIS KARATE
INSTRUCTOR--AND THAT
HE'S RESPONSIBLE FOR
MUCH OF THE CIVIL UN-
REST THAT'S HIT
METROPOLIS!

OH, I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE THINK-
ING... "SHE'S LOST HER
MIND! SHE'S BOUGHT
INTO SOME SICK
FANTASY!"

WELL, THIS
IS NO FANTASY,
GENTLEMEN. I HAVE
PROOF-- RIGHT
HERE!

ALL RIGHT, YOU HAVE OUR ATTENTION, BUT THIS BETTER BE GOOD--!

OH, IT IS! LUTHOR'S PLAYED ALL OF US FOR FOOLS...



... BUT HE'S RECENTLY BEEN STRICKEN WITH THE SAME MYSTERIOUS WASTING ILLNESS THAT'S AFFECTED THE CLONES OF THE CADMUS PROJECT. IN HIS DESPERATION TO FIND A CURE, HE'S GOTTEN CARELESS.

LUTHOR AND HIS SCIENTIFIC AIDE, DR. SYDNEY HAPPERSEN, RE-CREATED AN ARTIFICIAL BEING--

"--A BIZARRE, IMPERFECT DUPLICATE OF SUPERMAN--IN HOPES OF FINDING A CURE. I SAW THAT POOR BIZARRO DIE AS A RESULT OF THEIR LAB TESTS.*

"BUT BEFORE HE DIED, BIZARRO WIPE OUT THE DATA THAT THEY'D GATHERED ON HIM.

"ONE OF HIS KILLERS DID NOT REACT WELL TO THAT..."



"I'D THOUGHT THAT HE WAS JUST ANOTHER OF LEX'S TEAM--LUTHOR FLUNKIES--

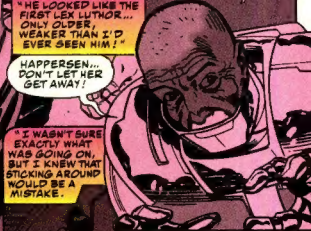


"--I WASN'T PREPARED FOR WHAT I FOUND BEHIND HIS HELMET.

"HE LOOKED LIKE THE FIRST LEX LUTHOR... ONLY OLDER, WEAKER THAN I'D EVER SEEN HIM!"

HAPPERSEN... DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!

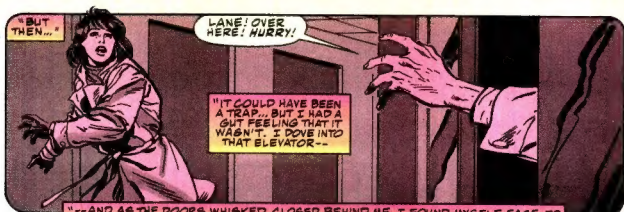
"I WASN'T SURE EXACTLY WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT I KNEW THAT STICKING AROUND WOULD BE A MISTAKE.



"THE LAB FLOORS OF LEXCORP TOWER WERE LIKE A MAZE, ALARMS STARTED GOING OFF, AND I WAS AFRAID THAT I'D BE CAUGHT BEFORE I COULD FIND MY WAY OUT.



*SUPER-MAN #88.

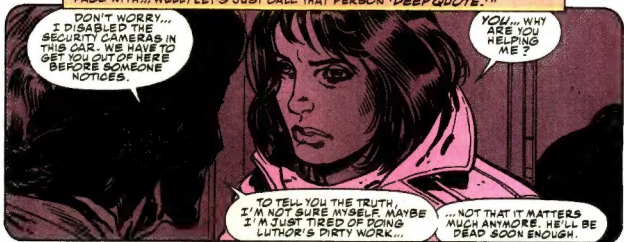


"BUT THEN..."

LANE! OVER HERE! HURRY!

"IT COULD HAVE BEEN A TRAP... BUT I HAD A GUT FEELING THAT IT WASN'T. I DROVE INTO THAT ELEVATOR--"

"--AND AS THE DOORS WHISKED CLOSED BEHIND ME, I FOUND MYSELF FACE TO FACE WITH... WELL, LET'S JUST CALL THAT PERSON 'DEEP QUOTE.'"



DON'T WORRY... I DISABLED THE SECURITY CAMERAS IN THIS CAR. WE HAVE TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE BEFORE SOMEONE NOTICES.

YOU... WHY ARE YOU HELPING ME?

TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I'M NOT SURE MYSELF. MAYBE I'M JUST TIRED OF DOING LUTHOR'S DIRTY WORK...

...NOT THAT IT MATTERS MUCH ANYMORE. HE'LL BE DEAD SOON ENOUGH.

"WE RODE THE ELEVATOR DOWN TO A SUBBASEMENT PARKING DECK WHERE, AWAY FROM SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS, DEEP QUOTE GAVE ME AN EARFUL."



"AT FIRST, I WAS AS SKEPTICAL AS YOU ARE, BUT DEEP QUOTE HAD PROOF TO BACK UP SOME OF THE ALLEGATIONS--A BIT OF HARD EVIDENCE THAT LEX HAD THOUGHT DESTROYED--"

"--A RECORDING FROM A SECURITY CAMERA WHICH HAD CAPTURED LUTHOR'S MURDER ATTEMPT ON HIS KARATE INSTRUCTOR, SASHA GREEN."

"I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY... WHY DIDN'T I GO TO THE POLICE WITH THIS? IN RETROSPECT, I SHOULD HAVE... BUT LEX'S LAWYERS HAD DISCREDITED EVIDENCE BEFORE."

BESIDES, AS FAR AS ANYONE KNEW, SASHA WAS MISSING BUT STILL ALIVE! I WANTED MORE PROOF-- ENOUGH TO NAIL LUTHOR TO THE WALL-- BEFORE I WENT PUBLIC.

BUT WHILE I WAITED, LEX GOT INTO MY COMPUTER AND SABOTAGED MY STORY. MY APARTMENT WAS FIREBOMBED, THE DISC RECORDING WIPED OUT. LUTHOR DID EVERYTHING HE COULD DO TO WRECK MY LIFE...

...BUT DEEP QUOTE CAME THROUGH FOR ME ONCE AGAIN, WITH ANOTHER COPY OF THE FIRST RECORDING-- AND MORE! SEE FOR YOURSELVES...



GOOD LORD! IF THAT TAPE'S LEGITIMATE~!

IT IS, COMMISSIONER. I HAD A VIDEO EXPERT CHECK IT OUT BEFORE I CALLED YOU TWO HERE.

I'D EXPECT NO LESS FROM YOU, PERRY.

THIS EVIDENCE IS SHOCKING, MS. LANE... BUT YOUR ALLEGATION THAT LUTHOR WAS MASQUERADING AS HIS SON--!

I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT PLASTIC SURGERY, MR. STERN. AFTER LUTHOR FAKED HIS DEATH IN A PLANE CRASH, HE HAD A NEW, YOUTHFUL BODY GENETICALLY ENGINEERED... IT'S ALL ON THE TAPE!

I KNEW THE ELDER LUTHOR... NO AMOUNT OF PLASTIC SURGERY COULD MAKE HIM LOOK LIKE A MAN IN HIS TWENTIES!

IT... STILL SOUNDS LIKE SCIENCE FICTION.

SO DID TELEVISION, ONCE UPON A TIME... SO DID COMPUTERS.

SPEAKING OF COMPUTERS, I HAD S.T.A.R. LABS RUN A COMPREHENSIVE DIAGNOSTIC ON THE DAILY PLANET'S SYSTEMS NET. IT TOOK THEM A WHILE, BUT THEY DISCOVERED BUGGED CHIPS IN OUR COMPUTERS...

...OUR LEXCORP COMPUTERS! LOIS'S STORY WAS SABOTAGED, FRANKLIN! AND THE "EVIDENCE" SUGGESTING THAT SHE HAD EMBEZZLED COMPANY FUNDS? IT WAS ALL PLANTED FROM AN OUTSIDE SOURCE.

"--TO ELIMINATE THAT PROBLEM."

GRIPES! I WISH THEY'D FOUND THE BUGS IN THIS GEAR BEFORE WE HAULED IT ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE RIVER...

...I MEAN, WE JUST GOT THAT TEMPORARY CITY ROOM SET UP!



MS. LANE, WHERE DID YOU SAY YOU FOUND THIS MAP?

AT LEXCORP** IT LOOKED IMPORTANT... IS IT?

-- AND I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY. I'LL DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER AS PUBLISHER TO--!

EH? WHAT???

MY GOD.

AS MANAGING EDITOR, I'VE TAKEN STEPS--

I'LL SAY! SOME OF THESE MARKINGS CORRESPOND TO SITES WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN BOMBED!

THE CITY IS IN YOUR DEBT, LOIS--



*RE: SUPERMAN #89.
** MAN OF STEEL #34.



WHAT WAS THAT-- AN EARTHQUAKE?

SOUNDED LIKE AN EXPLOSION... WAY OFF IN THE DISTANCE!

THIS IS THE POLICE COMMISSIONER-- PATCH ME THROUGH TO COMMAND POST DELTA!

HENDERSON HERE -- I'M AT THE DAILY PLANET PRINTING PLANT IN QUEENSLAND! YES, WE FELT THE SHOCKWAVE, TOO! WHAT'S GOING ON?

MY GOD IN HEAVEN...

WITH MORE ON THE STORY, WE TAKE YOU NOW TO GBS AIR-MOBILE ONE--

...LOOK AT THIS!

--AND SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT LYLE THOMAS. LYLE, CAN YOU HEAR ME?

YES, MORTON, WE'RE IN SKIES ABOVE KIRBY COUNTY... ROUGHLY 75 MILES NORTH AND WEST OF METROPOLIS. WE WERE FOLLOWING A TIP THAT A SPECIAL TEAM LUTHOR SQUAD HAD BEEN DISPATCHED TO THIS AREA--

--TO, IN THE WORDS OF ONE HIGHLY-PLACED SOURCE, "STRIKE BACK AT THE OUTLAWS WHO HAVE TURNED METROPOLIS INTO A WAR ZONE"...

...AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE CADMUS PROJECT, WHICH LEX LUTHOR II HAD BLAMED FOR RECENT TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. THAT SAID, WE WERE UNPREPARED FOR WHAT WE HAVE FOUND HERE.

BELOW US... IS WHAT WAS ONCE MOUNT CURTISS. AS YOU CAN SEE, THE TOP HALF OF THE MOUNTAIN HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY ATOMIZED!

I HAVEN'T SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS SINCE MOUNT ST. HELENS... AND MOUNT CURTISS IS NOT A VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN! I AM AT A LOSS TO GUESS WHAT COULD HAVE CAUSED SUCH AWESOME DESTRUCTION!

WE'RE GOING IN FOR A CLOSER LOOK...

Swan Song

ROGER STERN • JACKSON GUICE & DENIS RODIER AND CURT SWAN & MURPHY ANDERSON
WRITER ARTISTS
BILL OAKLEY • GLENN WHITMORE • CHRIS DUFFY • FRANK PITTARESE • MIKE CARLIN
LETTERER COLORIST ASSISTANT EDITOR ASSOCIATE EDITOR EXECUTIVE EDITOR

SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

Special thanks to JEFF GUICE & AL RAMIREZ

"...IT'S HARD TO TELL THROUGH THE DUST AND DEBRIS, BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING MOVING DOWN THERE!"

NO... NO!!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
I WON'T BELIEVE IT!

SUPER-BOY! GET A GRIP--!

LUTHOR'S JARHEADS BLOW THE PROJECT'S POWER CORE--

--AND YOU WANT ME TO GET A GRIP?!

YES, THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO HERE, AND WE'RE NEEDED ELSEWHERE.

ELSEWHERE?! LOOK, SUPERMAN, I'VE GOT NO GREAT LOVE FOR THE CADMUS PROJECT. I MEAN, THEY GREW ME IN A TUBE--

--IF I HADN'T BROKEN OUT,* THEY WOULD'VE TREATED ME LIKE SOME LAB RAT. BUT WHEN I CAME DOWN WITH THE CLONE PLAGUE, THEY FOUND A CURE... THEY SAVED MY LIFE!***

I HAD FRIENDS DOWN THERE... GUARDIAN, THE NEWSBOYS... DUBBILEX!

I KNOW, BUT WE MUSTN'T LINGER. WE HAVE TO GET AFTER THE TEAM LUTHOR SQUAD THAT CAUSED THIS! WE CAN'T LOSE THEM!

WELL, YEAH... SURE! BUT SHOULDN'T WE LOOK FOR SURVIVORS FIRST? YOU COULD SCOPE 'EM OUT WITH YOUR X-RAY VISION!

WISH I HAD X-RAY VISION.

I'VE ALREADY "SCOPED" THINGS OUT. BELIEVE ME...

"...THERE'S NO ONE ALIVE IN CADMUS THAT NEEDS OUR HELP ANYMORE--!"

MORTON, IT APPEARS THAT SUPERMAN AND SUPERBOY ARE ON THE SCENE!

WE CAN'T HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING, BUT...

LYLE THOMAS REPORTING... GBS

* IN ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #500.
** ADVENTURES #513.



"...THEY'RE HEADING THIS WAY! WE'LL TRY TO GET A STATEMENT--!"

SUPERMAN!
SUPERBOY!

CAN YOU
HEAR ME? THIS
IS LYLE THOMAS,
GBS NEWS!



GBS, HUH?
TOO MUCH...

"...TANA MOON AND I WERE PRACTICALLY
CREATING THE NEWS FOR GBS... WAS IT
JUST A FEW WEEKS AGO?"

FEELS LIKE
MONTHS, SO MUCH
HAS HAPPENED.

CAN YOU TELL
US WHAT'S
HAPPENED--?

THERE WAS
AN EXPLOSION.
WE'RE IN PURSUIT
OF THOSE
RESPONSIBLE--!

LET ME
FIELD THIS,
CHIEF.

YOU WANNA KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED?
I'LL TELL YA WHAT
HAPPENED! LEX
LUTHOR HAPPENED!

THE CADMUS PROJECT WAS
UNDER THAT MOUNTAIN! LUTHOR
SENT HIS ARMORED AIRBOYS IN
AND THEY BLEW IT SKY HIGH!

THE LEX-MAN IS
SERIOUSLY INTO
TOTAL DESTRUCTION,
BUT WE'RE
ON TO HIM! THE
CLOCK IS
TICKING, AND HIS
TIME IS RUNNING
OUT!

INCREDIBLE...
BUT PERHAPS
NO MORE
INCREDIBLE
THAN THE
EVENTS OF THE
PAST WEEK...

GBS LIVE

GBS LIVE

...WHICH SAW BILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIALIST LEX LUTHOR II ACCUSE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S CADMUS PROJECT OF PHYSICAL ATTACKS ON HIS CORPORATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTIES...

...WHICH SAW MUCH OF DOWNTOWN METROPOLIS EVACUATED AND PLACED UNDER MARTIAL LAW!

AND NOW, WE HAVE APPARENTLY SEEN--IN SUPERBOY'S WORDS--THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF THE CADMUS PROJECT--ALLEGEDLY BY THE ORDER OF LUTHOR HIMSELF!

DESTROYED?! BLOODY HELL!

THOSE INCOMPETENT DOLTS! IF I WEREN'T ALREADY HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY--I'D LIKE TO THROTTLE THEM WITH MY BARE HANDS!

SIR, PLEASE--

--TRY TO STAY CALM! YOU SHOULDN'T WASTE YOUR ENERGY, SM...

...RAVING...

...NEEDLESSLY.

SYDNEY'S RIGHT, LEX. SAVE YOUR STRENGTH. EVERYTHING YOU NEED RIGHT NOW IS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS...

...CONTROLS FOR YOUR MORPHINE DRIP, OXYGEN, ALL YOUR ELECTRONICS SYSTEMS--!

"STAY CALM!" "SAVE YOUR STRENGTH!" EASY FOR YOU TO SAY... YOU'RE NOT STUCK IN THIS HIGH-TECH IRON LUNG!

I CAN FEEL LIFE SLIPPING THROUGH MY HANDS, KELLEY!

...THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A SIMPLE MISSION! BUT NOW CADMUS IS GONE... ALL GONE... AND MY HOPES HAVE DIED WITH IT.

WHEN PACKARD GOT WORD TO US THAT CADMUS HAD FOUND A CURE FOR THIS WASTING DISEASE, I HAD HOPE. I SENT TEAM LUTHOR IN TO GET THE CURE FOR ME...

DWELLING ON THAT WON'T HELP, LEX. LET'S DISCUSS A MORE PRESSING CONCERN--YOUR MEDICATIONS! YOU HAVE GOOD SPELLS AND BAD, YOU'RE STABLE FOR NOW--

--BUT IF WE'RE GOING TO KEEP YOU COMFORTABLE OVER AN EXTENDED CRUISE, I NEED TO RESTOCK OUR STORES.

OF COURSE, HAPPERSEN, PUT A HELICOPTER AT DOCTOR KELLEY'S DISPOSAL.

YES, SIR.

PUT YOUR SUPPLY LISTS TOGETHER, KELLEY... THE PILOT CAN PROCURE WHAT YOU NEED FROM ONE OF MY PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES.

SIR, TEAM LUTHOR'S GROUP LEADER IS ON-LINE. HE CONFIRMS THE SITUATION VIS-A-VIS THE CADMUS PROJECT--THOUGH HE'S BLAMING SUPERMAN FOR THE EXPLOSION

HE'S REQUESTING FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

IS HE NOW?

TELL THOSE SCREW-UPS THAT THEY'RE ON THEIR OWN

SIR?! B-BUT, MR. L... THAT'S LIKE ABANDONING TROOPS BEHIND ENEMY LINES! WE CAN'T JUST--!

SHUT UP, SYDNEY. I'LL DO WHATEVER I WANT! THOSE IDIOTS FAILED ME...

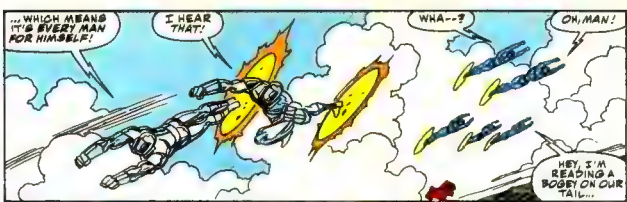
...AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, THEY CAN GO TO HELL.

ON OUR OWN?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WE'RE ON OUR--? HELLO?

I DON'T BELIEVE IT-- HAPPERTEN BROKE CONTACT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HE BROKE CONTACT?

JUST WHAT I SAID. LEXCORP IS HANGIN' US OUT TO DRY...



...WHICH MEANS
IT'S EVERY MAN
FOR HIMSELF!

I HEAR
THAT!

WHA--?

OH, MAN!

HEY, I'M
READING A
BOGEY ON OUR
TAIL...



...NO, TWO!!

YOW!

HEY, TEAM-
LOSERS! WHERE
DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE GOING?

IT'S
SUPERMAN--
AND THAT
BLASTED
KID!

SHOOT 'EM!
SHOOT 'EM
DOWN!



HEY, NICE
MISSILE!

SHWO!!
THEY
AREN'T
PAYING US
ENOUGH
FOR THIS!

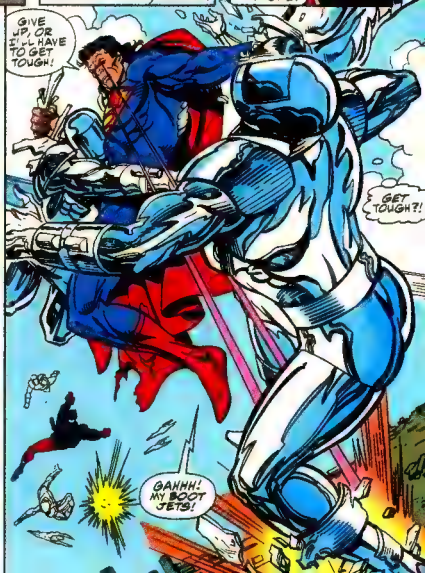
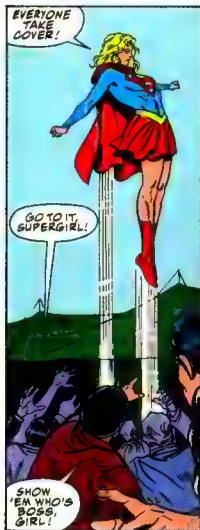
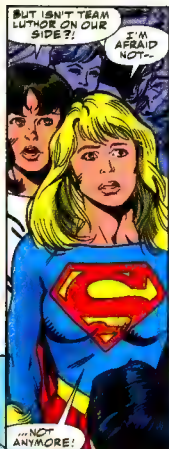
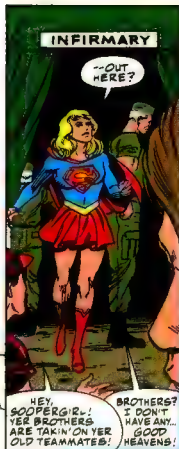
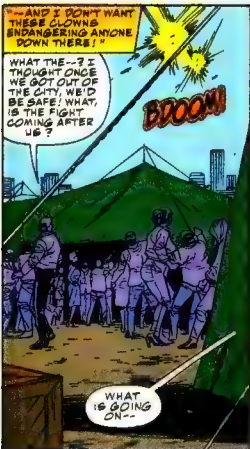


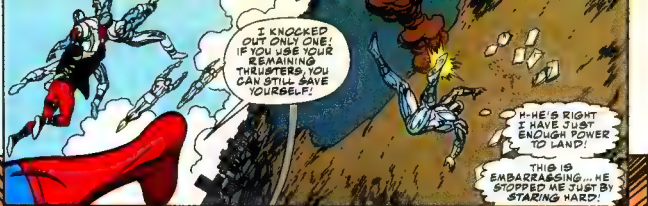
ARE
THEY SO
STUPID AS
TO THINK
THEY CAN
BEAT US?

WELL, THEY'RE NOT
EXACTLY ROCKET
SCIENTISTS...

O'MON,
SUPERBOY,
LET'S WRAP
THIS UP
FAST!

WE'RE
ALREADY OVER THE
METRO-COUNTY
FAIRGROUNDS--

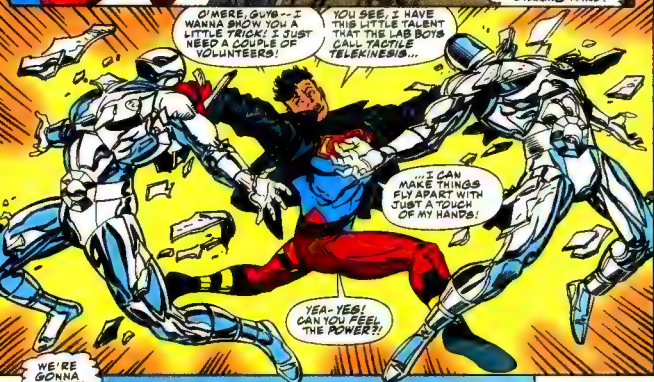




I KNOCKED OUT ONLY ONE! IF YOU USE YOUR REMAINING THRUSTERS, YOU CAN STILL SAVE YOURSELF!

H-H-E'S RIGHT I HAVE JUST ENOUGH POWER TO LAND!

THIS IS EMBARRASSING... HE STOPPED ME JUST BY STARING HARD!



O'MERE, GUYS--I WANNA SHOW YOU A LITTLE TRICK! I JUST NEED A COUPLE OF VOLUNTEERS!

YOU SEE, I HAVE THIS LITTLE TALENT THAT THE LAB BOYS CALL TACTILE TELEKINESIS...

...I CAN MAKE THINGS FLY APART WITH JUST A TOUCH OF MY HANDS!

YEA-YES! CAN YOU FEEL THE POWER?!

WE'RE GONNA MAKE IT! WE'RE GONNA--!

HOLD IT!



SORRY, BOYS. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I DIDN'T ENJOY THAT MUCH, EITHER.

TO THINK THAT I WAS ONCE PART OF TEAM LUTHOR... I WAS EVEN PROUD OF IT!

SUPERGIRL! WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?



THE FAIRGROUNDS...IT'S THE MAIN TENT CITY FOR EVACUEES FROM DOWNTOWN METROPOLIS. I'VE BEEN HELPING OUT THERE SINCE... SINCE I LEFT LEX.*

HEY, SMART MOVE!

YES, WELL... LET'S DELIVER THESE GOONS TO THE POLICE...

* IN THE SUPERGIRL MINISERIES

...FOR QUESTIONING.

YOU HEARD 'EM, SUPERMAN-- THEY ALL SWEAR THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHERE LUTHOR IS. AND, ODDLY ENOUGH, I THINK THEY'RE TELLING THE TRUTH.

SO DO I. THEY CERTAINLY DIDN'T SEEM HAPPY WITH HIM.

WE KNOW HE'S NO LONGER HOLED UP IN LEXCORP TOWER... WHERE IN BLAZES COULD HE BE?

YOU DUMPED THE LEX-MEISTER, HUH?

uh-huh

SO... ANY POST-BATTLE PLANS? I KNOW THIS KICKIN' BEACH IN MAUI...

THAT'S SWEET...

...BUT I DON'T THINK EITHER OF US WILL HAVE MUCH TIME FOR THE BEACH JUST YET.

I APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER TO STICK AROUND. WITH DOWNTOWN UNDER MARTIAL LAW AND LUTHOR ON THE LOOSE, I CAN USE A FEW EXTRA HANDS!

HEY, WE'RE GLAD TO HELP. CAN'T SPEND OUR WHOLE LIVES AT THE BEACH... RIGHT, SUPERBABE?

UH, RIGHT.

"SUPERBABE." SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE!

WHAT'S WITH THE HELMET, CHIEF? SOUVENIR?

NO, I HAVE HOPES THAT IT MIGHT LEAD US TO LUTHOR.

YEAH? NOW?

IT APPEARS TO BE CRAMMED FULL OF COMMUNICATIONS GEAR.

...BUT I DO KNOW A MAN WHO'S HAD EXPERIENCE IN ANALYZING LEXCORP ELECTRONICS--!

WHAT DO YOU THINK, PROFESSOR? CAN YOU HELP US?

PERHAPS, SUPERMAN--

IT WOULD BE! LEX ALWAYS LIKED TO KEEP CLOSE TABS ON EMPLOYEES!

NO SURPRISE THERE. I'M NO ELECTRICAL ENGINEER...

--THE CIRCUITRY IN THIS HELMET APPEARED TO BE SIMILAR TO THAT USED IN THE ARMOR WITH WHICH LUTHOR OUTFITTED JOSE DELGADO.* I'LL NEED TO RUN A SYSTEMS DIAGNOSTIC--!

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE SPAGHETTI, PROF?

JUST MAKING THE NECESSARY CONNECTIONS, LAD. IF YOU WANT TO MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL, HAND ME A BOLDERING GUN. THERE SHOULD BE ONE IN THE CABINET BEHIND YOU--THREE DRAWERS DOWN

ONCE, I WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND LEX WITH NO PROBLEM. FOR MOST OF OUR TIME TOGETHER, HE HARDLY LET ME OUT OF HIS SIGHT. NOW... I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS!

BUT HE'S A SICK MAN! THERE'S BEEN NO SIGN OF HIM AT ANY OF HIS COMPANY-OWNED HOSPITALS OR CLINICS. WHERE COULD THEY HAVE TAKEN HIM?

*A.K.A. GANGBUSTER, IN THE CLASSIC ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #451.

SHORTLY...

DASH IT ALL! THERE'S A SATELLITE UP-LINK BUILT INTO THE HELMET, BUT I CAN'T FIND ANY CARRIER SIGNAL TO TRACE! LUTHOR JUST ISN'T TRANSMITTING.

SORRY, SUPERMAN

HELLO? WHAT'S THAT? YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEAK UP, I CAN BARELY HEAR YOU!

OH... WHY, YES, AS A MATTER OF FACT, HE IS

SUPERMAN, IT'S FOR YOU! LOIS LANE... SOUNDS AS IF SHE'S AT SOME AIRPORT.

WUP-WUP-WUP! SUPERMAN?

MS. LANE? WHAT'S GOING ON?

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHERE ARE YOU?

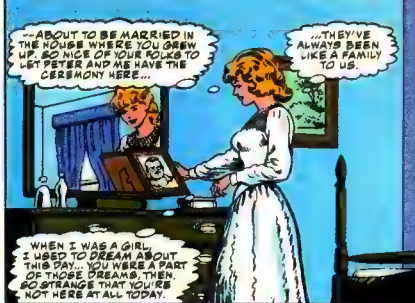
IT'S ALL RIGHT, EMIL. YOU DID YOUR BEST!



KANSAS.

THE HOME OF JONATHAN
AND MARTHA KENT.

I CAN HARDLY
BELIEVE IT, CLARK. HERE
I AM--



--ABOUT TO BE MARRIED IN
THE HOUSE WHERE YOU GREW
UP. SO NICE OF YOUR FOLKS TO
LET PETER AND ME HAVE THE
CEREMONY HERE...

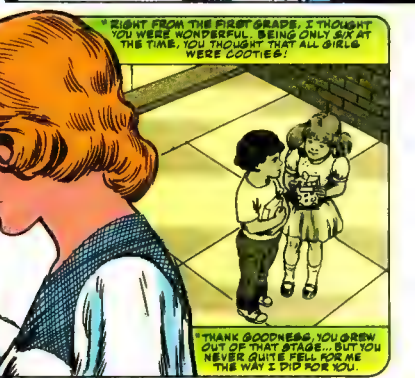
"THEY'VE
ALWAYS BEEN
LIKE A FAMILY
TO US.

WHEN I WAS A GIRL,
I USED TO DREAM ABOUT
THIS DAY... YOU WERE A PART
OF THOSE DREAMS. THEN,
SO STRANGE THAT YOU'RE
NOT HERE AT ALL TODAY.



I HOPE YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
SUCH CRAZY THINGS ARE
GOING ON IN METROPOLIS! EVEN
THOUGH YOU'RE THE STRONGEST
MAN ON EARTH-- AND I KNOW
THAT SUPERGIRL IS THERE
TO HELP.

--I STILL WORRY
ABOUT YOU... I STILL
CARE... GUESS I ALWAYS
WILL. AFTER ALL, YOU
WERE THE FIRST BOY I
FELL IN LOVE WITH...



"RIGHT FROM THE FIRST GRADE, I THOUGHT
YOU WERE WONDERFUL. BEING ONLY SIX AT
THE TIME, YOU THOUGHT THAT ALL GIRLS
WERE COOTIES!

"THANK GOODNESS YOU GREW
OUT OF THAT STAGE... BUT YOU
NEVER QUITE FELL FOR ME
THE WAY I DID FOR YOU.



"I THINK THAT I'D ALREADY STARTED TO
LOVE PETER ROSS BY THE TIME WE WERE ALL
IN HIGH SCHOOL, BUT I WAS STILL IN LOVE WITH
YOU. I ALWAYS FELT THERE WAS SOMETHING
SO VERY SPECIAL ABOUT YOU--



"--AND, OF COURSE,
THERE WAS. BUT ONLY
YOU AND YOUR FOLKS
KNEW ABOUT YOUR
EMERGING SUPER-
POWERS... UNTIL
THE NIGHT YOU
TOLD ME.

"I'LL NEVER
FORGET THAT
NIGHT...

"...OR HOW YOU
CONFIDED IN ME,
AS IF I WERE
A TRUSTED...
SISTER.

"AFTER THAT NIGHT, I KNEW DEEP DOWN THAT I'D NEVER BE MRS. CLARK KENT... IT JUST TOOK SEVERAL YEARS TO COME TO TERMS WITH THAT."

"I KNOW IT ISN'T EASY BEING SUPERMAN... ALL THAT POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY... I SAW THAT RIGHT OFF. BUT IT'S NOT EASY KNOWING SUPERMAN, EITHER."

"YOUR FAMILY... YOUR FRIENDS HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IN THE CROSS-FIRE SO MANY TIMES. I'VE BEEN KIDNAPPED... WE'VE HAD BUILDINGS DROPPED ON US..."

"AND JUST LAST WEEK... THERE WAS THAT BATTLE WITH THAT HORRIBLE SUZARRO CREATURE---! I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU FOR YEARS, CLARK, AND YOUR SECRET WILL GO WITH ME TO THE GRAVE..."

"...BUT I THINK THAT I'M FINALLY OVER WANTING TO SHARE MY LIFE WITH YOU..."

* ACTION #697.

LANA? IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?

HMM? OH... SURE, MARTHA. I WAS JUST WISHING CLARK COULD'VE BEEN HERE TODAY... LOIS, TOO AND SUPERGIRL.

IS THAT ALL? I WONDER...

WELL, DEAR, I WISH THEY COULD'VE BEEN, TOO!

MAYBE... MAYBE I SHOULD'VE POSTPONED THINGS FOR THEM...

OH, LANA, EVEN IF YOU HAD, YOU KNOW HOW UNPREDICTABLE THEIR LIVES ARE. THERE IS NO "BETTER TIME" FOR THEM.

I KNOW... I GUESS I JUST NEEDED TO HEAR SOMEONE ELSE SAY IT.

THERE YOU BOTH ARE! I HOPE YOU'RE JUST ABOUT READY-- REVEREND BREWSTER IS HERE!

LANA, PETER LOOKS GORGEOUS! SO DOES YOUR HUSBAND, MRS. KENT! YOU KNOW...

"...I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN JONATHAN IN A SUIT BEFORE!"

...MARTIAL LAW HAS NOW BEEN EXTENDED THROUGHOUT THE CENTRAL ISLAND BOROUGH OF METROPOLIS--

--AND SOURCES IN WASHINGTON REPORT THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS LAUNCHED AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ACTIVITIES OF LEX LUTHOR II--

IT'S ABOUT TIME!

--FOLLOWING THE LEVELING OF MOUNT CURTIS, NORTHWEST OF THE BELEAGUERED CITY!

JUMPIN' JEHOASAPHAT!

MEMBERS OF THE TEAM-LUTHOR SQUAD ALLEGEDLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DESTRUCTION HAVE CLAIMED THAT THEY ACTED UNDER DIRECT ORDERS OF THE LEX-CORP C.E.O.--!

IS THAT WHAT IT TAKES? DID LUTHOR HAVE TO BLOW UP A MOUNTAIN BEFORE ANYONE IN AUTHORITY CHALLENGED HIM?

AFTER ALL THE THINGS THAT SLIPPERY SO-AND-SO'S GOTTEN AWAY WITH... ALL THE GRIEF HE'S GIVEN CLARK AND SUPER-GIRL... I HOPE THEY NAIL HIS HIDE TO THE BARN DOOR THIS TIME!

AM, PEG-- WHAT'S THE WORD?

I FOUND THEM, AND THEY'RE ALMOST READY! JUST HAVING A LITTLE LAST-MINUTE GIRL TALK. THEY'LL BE DOWN SOON.

WELL, THEN, PERHAPS WE'D BEST RUN THROUGH OUR PARTS!

JONATHAN--?

EH? OH, CERTAINLY! SORRY, REVEREND, DIDN'T MEAN TO GET SO DISTRACTED!

LET ME SWITCH THIS OFF!

...MORE ON THAT STORY, HERE'S CBS'S CATHERINE GRANT.

THANK YOU, MORTON. I'M--

--COMING TO YOU LIVE FROM THE QUEENSLAND PARK PRINTING PLANT, WHERE THE EDITORIAL STAFF OF THE DAILY PLANET HAS TAKEN TEMPORARY QUARTERS IN THE WAKE OF DOWNTOWN'S EVACUATION

WITH ME IS LOIS LANE, THE VETERAN REPORTER WHO WAS RECENTLY FIRED IN THE WAKE OF SCURRILOUS STORIES THAT SAW PRINT UNDER HER BY-LINE...STORIES THAT, SHE CLAIMS, SHE NEVER WROTE.

THAT'S RIGHT, CAT. THOSE STORIES WERE THE RESULT OF DELIBERATE COMPUTER SABOTAGE, AIMED AT DISCREDITING ME--

--AND MY EXPOSE OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY AT LEXCORP INTERNATIONAL. WE HAVE PROOF OF THAT ACTIVITY WHICH WE'VE SHARED WITH THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE--

--AND WHICH WE'RE PREPARED TO SHARE WITH YOU NOW.

I SHOULD WARN YOUR VIEWERS THAT THE FOLLOWING TAPE IS QUITE GRAPHIC.

AHH-HKK!
--LUTHOR...
W-WHY--?

WHY SASHA?
BECAUSE I CAN!

LUTHOR INTENDED TO KILL SASHA GREEN--

--BUT THAT WAS HARDLY THE ONLY SECRET HE WAS HIDING.

LUTHOR ENGINEERED A FRAUD SO INTRIGATE AND BIZARRE, THAT I WOULD NOT HAVE BELIEVED IT MYSELF, HAD I NOT BEEN SHOWN THE TRUTH--

--BY A WOMAN WHO WITNESSED THE DECEPTION FROM THE INSIDE... DOCTOR BRITCHEN KELLEY!

NO...

FOR MANY YEARS, I WAS THE PERSONAL PHYSICIAN OF LEX LUTHOR THE FIRST. SOME MONTHS AGO, I PUBLICLY ADMITTED TO BEING THE MOTHER OF HIS "SON"... BUT THAT ADMISSION WAS A SHAM.

IT WAS MY ROLE IN LUTHOR'S GREATEST SWINDLE -- THE FAKING OF HIS DEATH, AND HIS SUBSEQUENT RETURN TO METROPOLIS IN THE PERSON OF HIS OWN HEIR.

THE GENETICS RESEARCH THAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE MIGHT HAVE REVOLUTIONIZED MEDICINE, BUT HE KILLED TO KEEP IT A SECRET... FOR HIS USE ONLY

I... DEEPLY REGRET MY PART IN THIS CHARADE. I'VE BEEN ADVISED BY MY ATTORNEYS NOT TO SAY MUCH MORE THAN THAT... BUT I WILL CONFIRM THAT LUTHOR PERSONALLY SABOTAGED MR. LANE'S STORY.

...NOT KELLEY! IT CAN'T BE KELLEY... SHE WAS SENDING FOR MORE MEDICINE... IT JUST CAN'T BE.

I--I'M AFRAID IT IS, SIR. I JUST CHECKED... SHE LEFT ON THAT SUPPLY 'COPTER!

BUT SHE COULDN'T BETRAY ME... SHE WAS IN TOO DEEP HERSELF! SHE KNOWS...

...GOOD LORD, SHE KNOWS PRACTICALLY EVERYTHING!

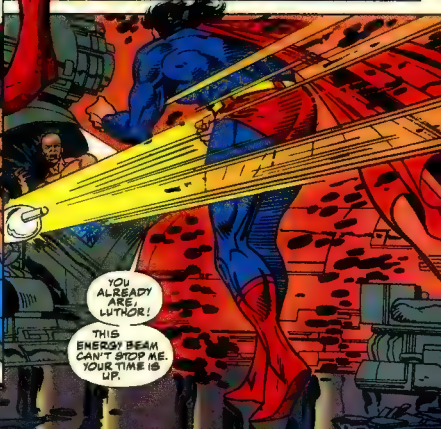
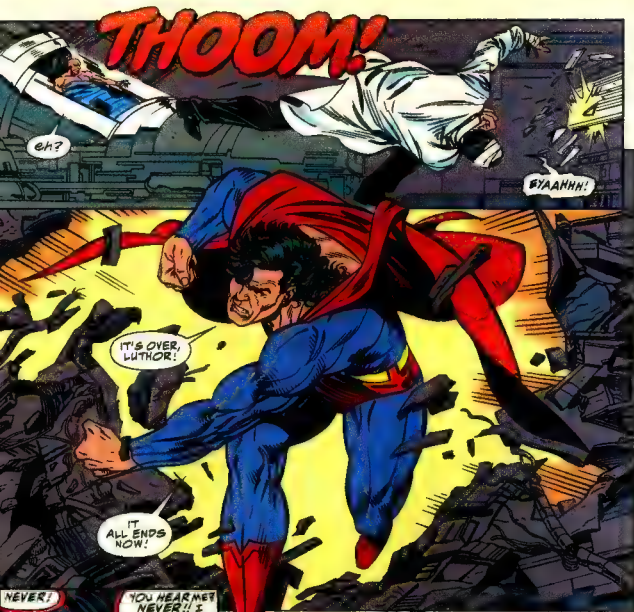
"THE THINGS SHE COULD TELL THEM--I HOW COULD SHE DO THIS TO ME?! I ENTRUSTED THAT WOMAN WITH MY HEALTH, WITH MY LIFE..."

"...WHY DID SHE HAVE TO DEVELOP A CONSCIENCE NOW? WHY?!"

"WAS IT BECAUSE OF SUPERGIRL?"

I AM SICK AND TIRED OF THE WAY YOU LEAD ON THAT INNOCENT CHILD! SHE GENUINELY LOVES YOU--SHE'S DEVOTED TO YOU--AND YOU'RE JUST USING HER!

SIR, WHATEVER THE CAUSE, WE ARE IN DIRE STRAITS! KELLEY NOT ONLY KNOWS YOUR SECRETS--SHE KNOWS WHERE WE ARE!





NO. NO.
IT ISN'T.
NOT
YET!

DON'T COME ANY CLOSER, SUPERMAN--
THESE CONTROLS HAVE A HAIR TRIGGER!
IF YOU SO MUCH AS JOSTLE ME OR THIS
CHAMBER, THEY'LL ACTIVATE! DON'T
TRY ANYTHING WITH YOUR HEAT VISION,
EITHER!

TAKE ONE MORE
STEP, AND I WILL
DESTROY
METROPOLIS!

NO,
LUTHOR...
YOU WON'T.

WE KNEW YOU'D
BE PREPARED FOR
UNWANTED VISITORS.
DOCTOR KELLEY HAS
BEEN VERY HELPFUL
ON THAT SCORE...

...AND SO
WAS THIS MAP!
WE KNOW ALL
ABOUT YOUR
HIDDEN BOMBS.
AS OF THIS
MOMENT--

"--THEY'VE ALL BEEN
DEALT WITH."

HERE'S THE LAST
ONE, INSPECTOR
TURPIN. MIND IF I
DISABLE IT
MYSELF?

BE MY GUEST,
LI'L LADY.

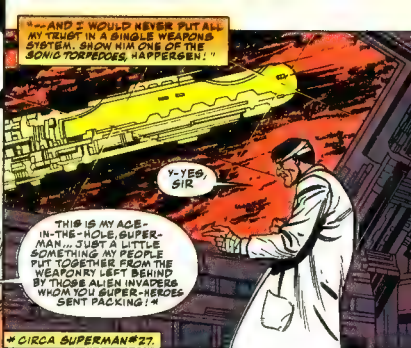
THANKS.

THAT
ENDS YOUR
THREAT,
LEX.



IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK, SUPERMAN? HAH!

THAT MAP SHOWS ONLY MINOR BOMBS I ALLOWED THE UNDERWORLDERS TO PLANT FOR ME! NOT EVEN KELLEY KNEW EVERY DETAIL--



"--AND I WOULD NEVER PUT ALL MY TRUST IN A SINGLE WEAPONS SYSTEM. SHOW HIM ONE OF THE SONIC TORPEDOES, HAPPERGEN!"

Y-YES, SIR

THIS IS MY ACE-IN-THE-HOLE, SUPERMAN... JUST A LITTLE SOMETHING MY PEOPLE PUT TOGETHER FROM THE WEAPONRY LEFT BEHIND BY THOSE ALIEN INVADERS WHOM YOU SUPER-HEROES SENT PACKING!

* CIRCA SUPERMAN #27.

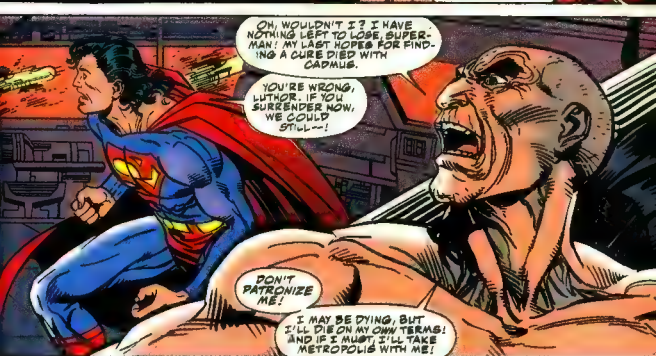


IT'S AN INGENUOUS LITTLE DEVICE. IT EMITS INTENSE ULTRASONICS WHICH PULVERIZE ROCK AND SUBSID TO A NEAR-LIQUID STATE.

THESE TORPEDOES CAN BURROW THROUGH THE VERY EARTH TO THEIR TARGETS-- AND THEIR TARGETS ARE THE SKYSCRAPERS OF METROPOLIS!

THE CITY'S SUBSTRATA IS SEEDS WITH TWO BATTERIES OF TORPEDOES, SUPERMAN... AND I CAN LAUNCH THEM BEFORE YOU CAN STOP ME!

YOU WOULDN'T--!



OH, WOULDN'T I? I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO LOSE, SUPERMAN! MY LAST HOPES FOR FINDING A CURE DIED WITH CADMUS.

YOU'RE WRONG, LUTHOR. IF YOU SURRENDER NOW, WE COULD STILL--!

DON'T PATRONIZE ME!

I MAY BE DYING, BUT I'LL DIE ON MY OWN TERMS! AND IF I MUST, I'LL TAKE METROPOLIS WITH ME!

I DON'T THINK SO, LUTHOR. YOU ALWAYS CLAIMED THAT METROPOLIS WAS "YOUR" CITY. WOULD YOU REALLY DESTROY HER IN SOME LAST PATHETIC GESTURE?



HOW DARE YOU CALL ME PATHETIC! METROPOLIS AND HER PEOPLE ARE MINE--AND THEY'LL LIVE OR DIE AS I SEE FIT!



THAT'S IT, MR. L! STAND FIRM! YOU HOLD ALL THE CARDS!



THINK ABOUT IT, LEX. EVEN WITH THE EVACUATIONS AND ALL THE UNREST, PEOPLE STILL LOOK UP TO YOU. YOU'RE THE MAN WHO FUNDS THEIR SCHOOLS AND HOSPITALS...



"...UNTIL NOW, MOST OF THEM HAVE NEVER EVEN GLIMPSED YOUR DARKER SIDE. LAUNCH THOSE TORPEDOES, AND THEY'LL THINK OF NOTHING ELSE..."



SUPERMAN... I... I'M WARNING YOU--!

"...YOU'LL BE LUTHOR THE KILLER, LUTHOR THE MONSTER!"

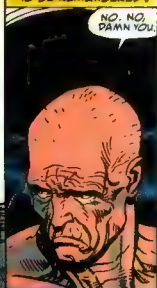


SHUT UP... SHUT UP!!

YOU'LL BECOME THE AMERICAN HITLER, AND THEY'LL SPIT AT THE SOUND OF YOUR NAME.

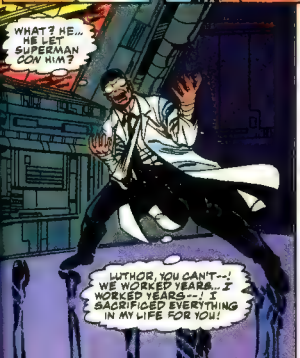


"IS THAT HOW YOU WANT TO BE REMEMBERED?"



NO, NO, DAMN YOU.

WHAT? HE... HE LET SUPERMAN GO HIM?



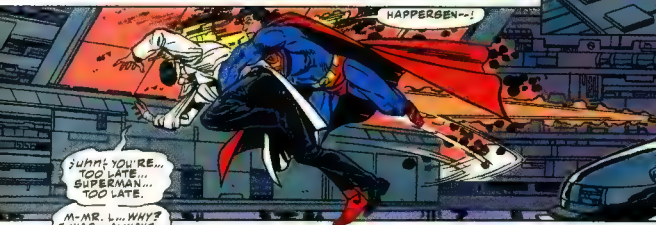
LUTHOR, YOU CAN'T--! WE WORKED YEARS--! I WORKED YEARS--! I SACRIFICED EVERYTHING IN MY LIFE FOR YOU!

I WON'T LET YOU GIVE UP!!



!?!?

HAPPERSEN--



QUICK,
LUTHOR--
HOW DO WE
SHUT DOWN
THE TOR-
PEDOES?

WE CAN'T...

...ONCE THEY'RE
ACTIVATED, THEY
CAN'T BE
RECALLED. GOD
FORGIVE ME

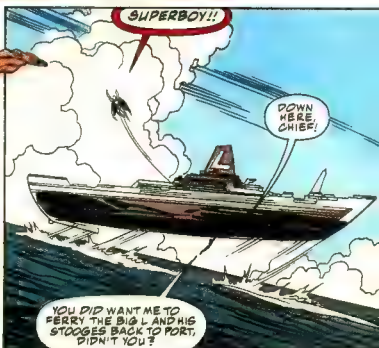
THEN I'LL GO
TO THE SOURCE.
WHERE ARE THEY
BURIED?

I DON'T KNOW...
ALL OVER DOWNTOWN
METROPOLIS...
HAPPERSEN
HANDLED THAT.
BELIEVE ME,
SUPERMAN...



"...I WOULD HELP
YOU IF I COULD--

--BUT I DON'T
KNOW WHERE
THE TORPEDOES
ARE BURIED!"



SUPERBOY!!

DOWN
HERE,
CHIEF!

YOU DID WANT ME TO
FERRY THE BIG L AND HIS
STOOGES BACK TO PORT,
DIDN'T YOU?



YES, BUT THERE'S
A CHANGE IN PLANS! WE'RE
NEEDED BACK IN THE
CITY IMMEDIATELY!

DISABLE THE
ENGINES--DISABLE
EVERYTHING EXCEPT
FOR LUTHOR'S LIFE-
SUPPORTS--

--THEN RADIO
THE SHIP'S POSITION
TO THE COAST GUARD
AND JOIN ME DOWN-
TOWN! I'M GOING
ON AHEAD!

YOUR
WISH IS MY
COMMAND,
SAHIB!

SUPERMAN?

MAN,
WHEN HE'S IN
A HURRY--

"--HE LEAVES US ALL IN THE DUST!"

HAPPENSEN WAS ALWAYS THE PERFECT PLUNKY... DOING WHAT-EVER LUTHOR WANTED OF HIM. I NEVER EXPECTED HIM TO CRACK LIKE THAT... NEVER!

EVIDENTLY, NEITHER DID LUTHOR.

SUPERGIRL! DO YOU READ ME?

LOUD AND CLEAR. THE EMERGENCY HERE IS OVER--

NO, I'M AFRAID IT ISN'T! LUTHOR HAD ANOTHER BACKUP PLAN--

--THE ENTIRE CITY MAY BE IN JEOPARDY!

GET YOUR PEOPLE CLEAR --NOW!

WILL DO!

WHU--? HEY!

SORRY FOR THE SUDDEN PSYCHE-LIFT, INSPECTOR--

--BUT WE HAVE TO LEAVE. I'LL TRY TO MAKE THE RIDE A LITTLE SMOOTHER!

I CAN SEE METROPOLIS ON THE HORIZON AS CLEARLY AS IF I WERE THERE, BUT I STILL CAN'T SPOT LUTHOR'S TORPEDOES--

--THERE'S JUST TOO MUCH UNDERGROUND METAL IN A BIG CITY, OBSCURING MY K-RAY VISION! THIS IS BAD...VERY BAD...

...I MIGHT HAVE TO BE ON TOP OF THE TORPEDOES TO SPOT EVEN ONE OF THEM! HOW WILL I EVER TRACK THEM ALL?

"I'D SAY WE SHOULD GET STARTED..."



...PEGGY, IF
YOU WILL--?

JORDWAY

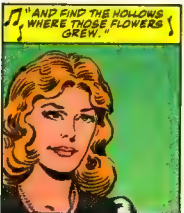
OH, PROMISE ME
THAT SOME DAY
YOU AND I...

I WISH THAT PETER'S
PARENTS HAD LIVED
TO SEE THIS... OH,
AND LANA'S AUNT
HELEN! THAT WOMAN
WAS A SAINT...

...COMING HOME TO
RAISE LANA AFTER
THE GIRL'S PARENTS
PASSED ON. I'VE
OFTEN WONDERED
WHAT HELEN LANG
GAVE UP WHEN SHE
MOVED BACK HERE
FROM KANSAS CITY...

...SHE NEVER MARRIED,
BUT SHE HAD THAT WEDDING
DRESS TUCKED AWAY IN HER
CEDAR CHEST WELL, SHE
DID ALWAYS SAY SHE WANTED
LANA TO WEAR IT--!

...WILL TAKE
OUR LOVE
TOGETHER
TO SOME
SKY--



"--WHERE WE CAN BE
ALONE AND FAITH RENEW."

"AND FIND THE HOWLDS
WHERE THOSE FLOWERS
GREW."



DEARLY BELOVED, WE GATHER HERE IN
THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND MANKIND TO
WITNESS AND BLESS THE JOINING TOGETHER
OF LANA ELIZABETH LANG AND PETER
JOSEPH ROSS IN HOLY MATRIMONY.

THE UNION OF HUSBAND AND
WIFE IN HEART, BODY, AND MIND IS
INTENDED FOR THEIR MUTUAL
JOY...

"...FOR THE HELP AND COMFORT GIVEN ONE ANOTHER IN PROSPERITY AND IN ADVERSBITY."

WELL, HELLO, MR. OLSEN... MR. TROUPE!

MS. LANE?! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

LOOKING FOR YOU TWO AMONG OTHER THINGS... NO ONE'S BEEN ABLE TO RAISE YOU FOR HOURS!

YEAH, OUR RADIO AND PHONE BATTERIES RAN DOWN, LOIS.

THIS END OF THE ISLAND IS LOCKED DOWN TIGHTER THAN A DRUM. JIM AND I'VE HAD TO PLAY HIDE-AN-SEEK WITH THE NATIONAL GUARD--

--DESPITE OUR PRESS CREDENTIALS. HOW'D YOU EVEN GET HERE?

YOU DON'T KNOW LOIS LANE, RON!

I'LL BET SHE FAST-TALKED THE GUARD RIGHT OUTTA THIS HUMVEE!

DIDN'T HAVE TO, JIM. THE PLANET OWNS THIS BUGGY!

THEN YOU'RE BACK TO WORK?

UH-HUH! AND LUTHOR'S IN THE DOGHOUSE...

...SOON TO BE IN THE JAILHOUSE!

WOW! WHAT'S THE STORY?

TELL YOU ON THE WAY. PERRY WANTS A BASE REESTABLISHED AT THE PLANET BUILDING--

--A.S.A.P. AND I COULD USE YOUR--!

WHAT WAS THAT? SOUNDED LIKE--!

OH, LORD. LOOK--

NOON

BOOM

BOOM

--THE GBS BUILDING!!







DAILY

BADA-

BOOM!

NO...

AS A YOUNG BOY, PERRY WHITE WOULD STAND ON THE ROOF OF THE SQUALID TENEMENT WHERE HE LIVED, GAZING FAR ACROSS TOWN TO THE GLEAMING GLOBE ATOP THE DAILY PLANET BUILDING.

TO HIM, THE GLOBE SHONE LIKE A BEACON, LIGHTING THE WAY TO A BETTER WORLD THAN THE ONE HE KNEW. PERRY FOLLOWED THAT BEACON...

BY THE TIME HE WAS TEN, HE'D FINAGLED A JOB AS A COPY BOY FOR THE GREAT METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER. THE PLANET BECAME HIS LIFELINE, RESCUING HIM FROM A DEAD-END EXISTENCE IN SUICIDE SLUM.

PERRY ROSE THROUGH THE RANKS TO BECOME A LEADING REPORTER... A RESPECTED FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT... AND, ULTIMATELY, THE PAPER'S MANAGING EDITOR

ALL THESE YEARS, THE DAILY PLANET HAS BEEN PERRY WHITE'S LIFE... HIS WORLD...

... PLEASE
... NO...

...AND NOW, THAT
WORLD IS
TUMBLING DOWN.



SUPERMAN!



IT BLEW
UP IN HIS
FACE! HE'S
FALLING--!

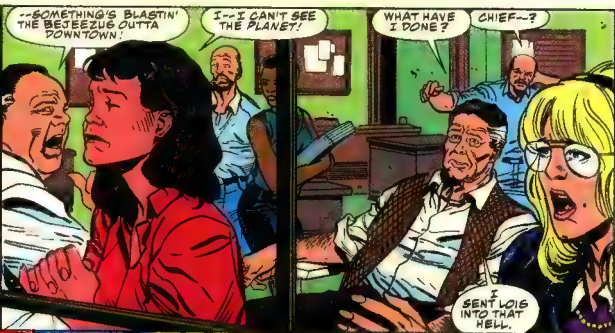


...NOT THE
PLANET.

MR. WHITE?

WHAT--?

OMIGOD--





"O GRACIOUS GOD, LOOK MERCIFULLY UPON THIS MAN AND THIS WOMAN WHO COME SEEKING YOUR BLESSING... AND ASSIST THEM THAT THEY MAY HONOR AND KEEP THE PROMISES OF THEIR VOWS. AMEN."

PETER... LANA... WILL YOU HAVE EACH OTHER, TO LIVE TOGETHER IN THIS COVENANT OF MARRIAGE? WILL YOU LOVE EACH OTHER... COMFORT, HONOR, AND KEEP EACH OTHER, IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH...



"...AND, FORSAKING ALL OTHERS, BE FAITHFUL TO EACH OTHER, AS LONG AS YOU BOTH SHALL LIVE?"

WE WILL.



I, PETER, TAKE YOU, LANA, TO BE MY WIFE...

I, LANA, TAKE YOU, PETER, TO BE MY HUSBAND...



"...TO HAVE AND TO HOLD FROM THIS DAY FORWARD... FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE... FOR RICHER, FOR POORER... IN SICKNESS AND IN HEALTH... TO LOVE AND TO CHERISH..."

"...TILL DEATH
DO US PART."

RUN!!

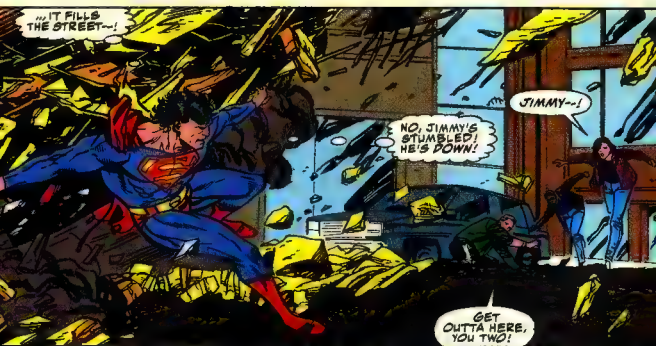
DIDN'T...
SLOW IT
DOWN...
ENOUGH

GLOBE...
ROLLED
RIGHT
OVER
ME!

GOT TO
STOP IT...

"...OR LOIS... AND
THE OTHERS...
DON'T STAND A
CHANCE!"

GLOBE'S
SO BIG...



...IT FILLS
THE STREET--!

JIMMY--!

NO, JIMMY'S
STUMBLED!
HE'S DOWN!

GET
OUTTA HERE,
YOU TWO!



LEAVE ME!
SAVE
YOURSELVES!

DON'T BE
RIDICULOUS!
GIVE ME YOUR
HAND!

THERE'S
NO NEED TO
ACT SO
DARNED
NOBLE,
JIM...



!WHOW!!

...SUPERMAN'S
ALREADY SAVED
US ALL!

OH, YEAH.

I KNEW
THAT.



SUPERMAN
... WHAT ON
EARTH--?

SONIC TORPEDOES,
MS. LANE... PART OF A LITTLE
FAIL-SAFE SYSTEM THAT
LUTHOR HAD KEPT
SECRET... EVEN
FROM DR. KELLEY.

THIS IS...
BEYOND BELIEF!
I KNEW LUTHOR
WAS LOSING IT,
BUT I NEVER
THOUGHT HE'D DO
ANYTHING SO... SO
MONSTROUS!



WELL
ACTUALLY, HE
DIDN'T LAUNCH
THIS MADNESS
HIMSELF,
BUT--!

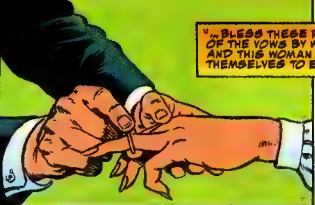
OH,
NO...



...GET
DOWN!!

KRATOOM!

"O LORD..."



"...BLESS THESE RINGS AS A SIGN OF THE VOWS BY WHICH THIS MAN AND THIS WOMAN HAVE BOUND THEMSELVES TO EACH OTHER..."



...AMEN.

AMEN!

WE GIVE THESE RINGS AS A SYMBOL OF OUR VOWS... WITH ALL THAT WE ARE... ALL THAT WE HAVE... AND ALL THAT WE WILL BE.

GOD BLESS 'EM. I HOPE THEY'LL ALWAYS BE AS HAPPY TOGETHER AS MARTHA AN' ME.

NOW THAT PETER AND LANA HAVE GIVEN THEMSELVES TO EACH OTHER BY SOLEMN VOWS--

--WITH THE JOINING OF HANDS AND THE EXCHANGING OF RINGS-- I PRONOUNCE THAT THEY ARE HUSBAND AND WIFE.

THOSE WHOM GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER--



"--LET NO ONE PUT ASUNDER."

LOIS! LOIS, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

I... I GUESS SO.

I THINK WE'RE ALL OKAY, SUPERMAN... EARS ARE STILL RINGING, THOUGH.

HEADS UP, CHIEF-- HERE COMES THE CAVALRY!

WHAT A MESS! LUTHOR WAS BABBLING 'BOUT HIS TORPEDOES WHEN I LEFT HIM--

YES, AND SOME ODD INTERFERENCE KNOCKED OUT OUR TRANS-CEIVERS.

--BUT I NEVER EXPECTED THIS! BUILDINGS ARE FALLING RIGHT AND LEFT!

--THEN WE'VE NO WAY TO FURTHER RADIO THE GUARD OR THE POLICE! LUTHOR CLAIMED THERE WERE TWO BATTERIES OF TORPEDOES, AND WE HAVE TO ASSUME HE WAS TELLING THE TRUTH.

ANY PEOPLE LEFT DOWNTOWN ARE IN DANGER. I NEED YOU TWO TO CLEAR EVERYONE OUT-- POLICE, MILITARY, WHOEVER.

I HAVE TO TRY TO STOP THOSE TORPEDOES!

INTER-FERENCE? IF THAT'S RELATED TO THE TORPEDOES! ULTRA-SONICS--

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

GO FOR IT, BIG GUY! IF ANYONE CAN DO IT, YOU CAN!

I HOPE SO, SUPERBOY. THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY PATTERN TO THESE BOMBINGS-- I DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW MANY TORPEDOES THERE ARE! AT LEAST THEY AREN'T GOING OFF ALL AT ONCE!

HMMM... GETTING AN IDEA--! AND I'VE FINALLY FOUND A WAY TO TRACK THE TORPS!

I'M CLOSE ENOUGH NOW TO HEAR THEIR MOVEMENT UNDERGROUND, WHICH GIVES ME A RANGE FOR MY X-RAY VISION AND--

--YES! THERE'S ONE...



...AND IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S HEADING--

--FOR THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEWSTIME BUILDING!



GOT TO STOP IT! I WON'T ALLOW A REPLAY--



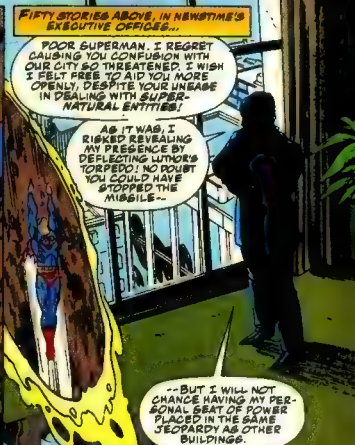
--OF THE EXPLOSION AT THE PLANET! IF I CAN DISABLE-- EH?

IT... IT VEERED OFF!



DID IT DETECT ME? AND IF SO, HOW?

WELL, HOWEVER IT WORKS, I CAN'T LET IT GET AWAY!



FIFTY STORIES ABOVE, IN NEWSTIME'S EXECUTIVE OFFICES...

POOR SUPERMAN. I REGRET CAUSING YOU CONFUSION WITH OUR CITY SO THREATENED. I WISH I FELT FREE TO AID YOU MORE OPENLY, DESPITE YOUR UNEASE IN DEALING WITH SUPER-NATURAL ENTITIES!

AS IT WAS, I RISKED REVEALING MY PRESENCE BY DEFLECTING LUTHOR'S TORPEDO! NO DOUBT YOU COULD HAVE STOPPED THE MISSILE--

--BUT I WILL NOT CHANCE HAVING MY PERSONAL SEAT OF POWER PLACED IN THE SAME JEOPARDY AS OTHER BUILDINGS.

IF ONLY I COULD HAVE
NEUTRALIZED THE TORPEDOES
BEFORE THEIR LAUNCH: ALAS, I
AM FAR FROM OMNISCIENT ON THIS
PLANE OF EXISTENCE, AND EVEN
NOW THAT I AM AWARE OF
THEM--

--I COULD NOT
DEFLECT THEM ALL
WITHOUT DRAWING UNDUE
ATTENTION TO MYSELF.
AND THIS WORLD'S INHABI-
TANTS MUST NEVER LEARN
THAT PUBLISHER COLLIN
THORNTON IS BUT THE
MORTAL GHOST--

--OF LORD
SATANUS!

--AND I MUST TRUST
IN HIM TO SUCCEED
NOW, LEST THE ENTIRE
CITY FALL!"

LUTHOR WAS RIGHT
ABOUT THIS BEING BASED ON
AN ALIEN TECHNOLOGY. THE
INTERNAL CIRCUITRY IS UN-
LIKE ANYTHING I'VE EVER
SEEN-- I CAN'T TELL ITS
TRIGGERING MECHAN-
ISM FROM ITS GUIDANCE
SYSTEM

BUT THEY DO
SEEM TO BORE UP
INTO THEIR
INTENDED TARGETS
BEFORE EXPLODING.
IF THAT'S THE CASE,
AND THEY WON'T
EXPLODE
UNDERGROUND--!

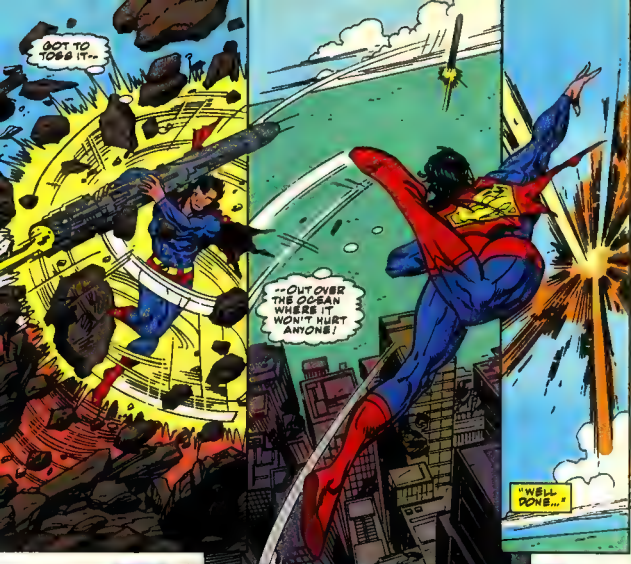
IF I'M FAST
ENOUGH
MAYBE I CAN
JUST THROW IT
AWAY!

SUCH DESTRUC-
TION IS UNFORTUNATE.
STILL, THE DOWNTOWN
CITIZENRY HAS BEEN
EVACUATED, AND
THEY SHALL BLAME
LEX LUTHOR. THAT
SUITS MY PURPOSES
WELL...

...AS DOES DEFERRING
THE CITY'S PHYSICAL DEFENSE
TO SUPERMAN. HE WAS A
VALUED, IF RELUCTANT ALLY
IN BATTLE AGAINST THE
MINIONS OF MY ACCURSED
SISTER BLAZE--*

* IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE HIM,
CHECK OUT ACTION # 680
AND SEE FOR YOURSELF.

"INCREDIBLE! HE
SPINS AS IF HE WERE
A LIVING DRILL!"



KRATAK!

YO, SUPERMAN-- WE PULLED
EVERYONE WE COULD FIND OUT
OF DOWNTOWN.

WHY THE
BIG DITCH?

THE
TORPEDOES
APPEAR TO
BURROW ONLY
SO DEEP.

THE IDEA IS
TO DIG DOWN BELOW
THAT DEPTH AND
INTERCEPT THEM BE-
FORE THEY GO ANY
FARTHER INTO THE
CITY!

OF COURSE,
LIKE A
FIREBREAK!

COME ON,
SUPERBOY, LET'S
GIVE HIM A
HAND!

PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT! FOR
THIS TO WORK, WE HAVE TO SCOOP
OUT ALL OF 53RD STREET--
VIRTUALLY FROM RIVER TO
RIVER!

LISTEN!

TO WHAT? WHAT DO
YOU HEAR?

THE
TORPEDOES!

HERE
THEY COME!
DON'T LET
THEM GET
PAST YOU!

NOT TO
WORRY,
CHIEF--

"THIS IS AS FAR UPTOWN AS THEY'RE GONNA GO!"

"AH! ALL GOES PRECISELY AS I'D HOPED..."

"...SUPERMAN AND HIS ALLIES ARE STOPPING THE SECOND WAVE OF TORPEDOES. NO MORE OF THE CITY SHALL BE THREATENED."

"THERE REMAINS BUT ONE FINAL ACT OF RETRIBUTION... AND THAT, I MUST ADDRESS MYSELF!"

"NOW, WHILE THE SUPER-TRIO IS OCCUPIED, I CAN SAFELY REACH OUT UNDETECTED WITH MY POWER--"

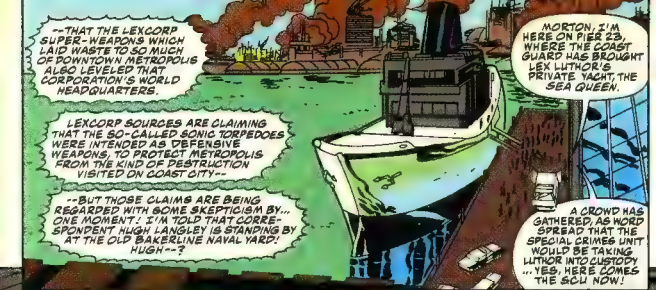
"--SEIZE CONTROL OF A HANDFUL OF THE REMAINING TORPEDOES, AND DIRECT THEM BACK TOWARDS LUTHOR'S MOST PRIZED HOLDING!"

"THE LEXCORP TOWER HAS LONG BEEN THE SYMBOL OF LUTHOR'S POWER..."

"...BUT NO
MORE!"

SKRAKATABOOM!

SOME
ARE CALLING
IT POETIC
JUSTICE--



--THAT THE LEXCORP SUPER-WEAPONS WHICH LAID WASTE TO SO MUCH OF DOWNTOWN METROPOLIS ALSO LEVELLED THAT CORPORATION'S WORLD HEADQUARTERS.

LEXCORP SOURCES ARE CLAIMING THAT THE SO-CALLED SONIC TORPEDOES WERE INTENDED AS DEFENSIVE WEAPONS, TO PROTECT METROPOLIS FROM THE KIND OF DESTRUCTION VISITED ON COAST CITY--

--BUT THOSE CLAIMS ARE BEING REGARDED WITH SOME SKEPTICISM BY... ONE MOMENT! I'M TOLD THAT CORRESPONDENT HUGH LANGLEY IS STANDING BY AT THE OLD BAKERLINE NAVAL YARD! HUGH--?

MORTON, I'M HERE ON PIER 23, WHERE THE COAST GUARD HAS BROUGHT LEX LUTHOR'S PRIVATE YACHT, THE SEA QUEEN.

A CROWD HAS GATHERED, AS WORD SPREAD THAT THE SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT WOULD BE TAKING LUTHOR INTO CUSTODY... YES, HERE COMES THE SCU NOW!

MURDERER!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. LEXCORP SCHOLARSHIPS PUT MY KIDS THROUGH COLLEGE! THIS CAN'T BE HIS FAULT!

THEY OUGHTA BURY HIM IN THAT BOX!

"AS YOU CAN HEAR, EMOTIONS ARE RUNNING HIGH. I CAN SEE A MEMBER OF LUTHOR'S LEGAL STAFF... I'LL TRY TO GET A WORD WITH HER..."

SIMPLY LUDICROUS THAT MY CLIENT WOULD TRY TO DESTROY THE CITY! SCORES OF HIS OWN PROPERTIES WERE DESTROYED. THIS WAS THE ACT OF A DERANGED EMPLOYEE...

...A MAN WHOM MR. LUTHOR, DESPITE HIS WEAKENED CONDITION, TRIED TO STOP! SUPERMAN HIMSELF CAN VERIFY THAT!

WHAT ABOUT THE ATTEMPTED MURDER CHARGES?

I HAVE NO FURTHER COMMENT AT THIS TIME.

INSPECTOR SAWYER, THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME QUESTION AS TO LUTHOR'S ROLE IN THIS--!

SO I'M TOLD. BUT WE STILL HAVE ENOUGH ON LUTHOR TO PUT HIM AWAY FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE. AND WE WILL--



--YOU CAN COUNT ON IT!

OH, I AM, INSPECTOR

WITH LUTHOR IN CUSTODY, AND THE CITY IN DIS-ARRAY, THERE ARE NONE TO CHALLENGE MY POWER... SAVE FOR SUPERMAN--



--AND HIS ILK--

ASTOUNDING! I NEVER THOUGHT I'D LIVE TO SEE THIS!

YEAH, LOOKS LIKE WE FINALLY PEELED LUTHOR'S TEFLON. PROF!

--YOU CAN COUNT ON IT!

"WE," SUPERBOY? DON'T FORGET DOCTOR KELLEY. THINK OF WHAT SHE SACRIFICED...

"...IMAGINE THE SECRETS--AND THE GUILT!-- THAT SHE'D BORNE ALL THOSE YEARS. I DIDN'T KNOW HER WELL, BUT I THINK SHE LOVED LUTHOR VERY MUCH... MORE THAN I EVER DID

"WHY ELSE WOULD SHE HAVE HELPED HIM COVER UP HIS CRIMES FOR SO LONG? I MEAN, LUTHOR HAD ME FOOLED, BUT KELLEY KNEW WHAT HE WAS, AND STILL STAYED WITH HIM

"SHE GAVE UP SO MUCH FOR HIM... AND NOW, SHE'S GIVEN UP HER FREEDOM. AS WELL, I HOPE THE COURTS ARE MERCIFUL TO HER

"LUTHOR, ON THE OTHER HAND, WELL... HE MIGHT NOT LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO GET WHAT HE DESERVES!"



MY OLD MAN ALWAYS LOOKED UP TO LUTHOR... IF HE WAS ALIVE TO SEE THIS, IT'D KILL 'IM!

DOUBLE-CHECK HIS OXYGEN. THE D.A. WANTS HIM ALIVE FOR THE TRIAL

TRIAL... HAH! THEY THINK ME HELPLESS--

--BUT THERE ARE CARDS I'VE YET TO PLAY! THEY'LL SEE...



"...THEY'LL ALL SEE!"

THERE HE IS! GET 'ER DOWN AS CLOSE AS YOU CAN, DAVE.

LOOKS KINDA RUGGED, MS. LANE... YOU WANT I SHOULD WAIT FOR YOU?

NO, GO ON... I'LL BE FINE.

SUPERMAN!

SUPERMAN?

THE PHONE LINES ARE A MESS, BUT I FINALLY GOT THROUGH TO YOUR PARENTS. I GUESS WE MISSED A NICE LITTLE WEDDING.

CLARK?

I COULDN'T STOP ENOUGH OF THE TORPEDOES IN TIME, LOIS.

I FAILED--! DON'T TALK LIKE THAT! YOU'RE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS... LUTHOR IS!

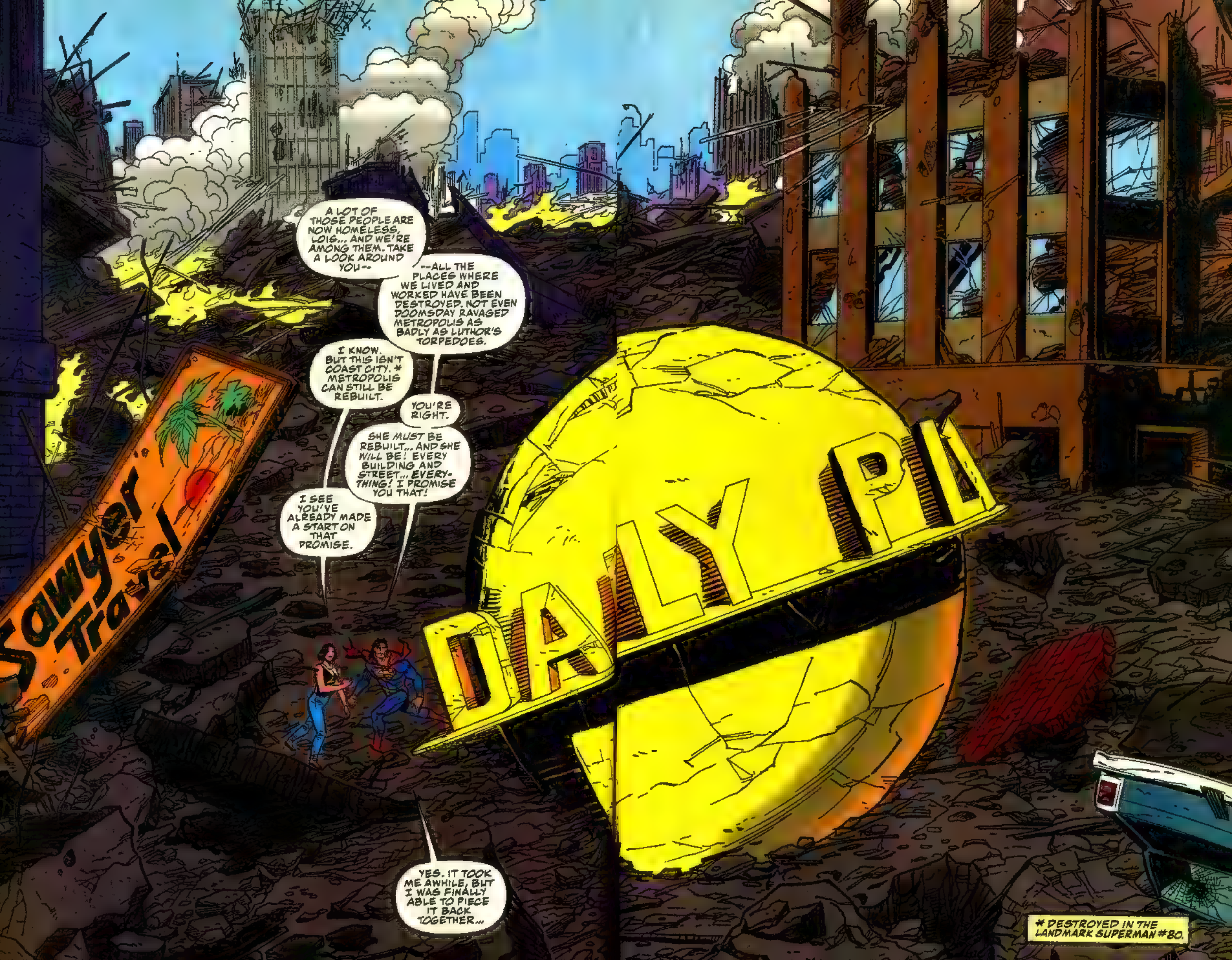
I SHOULD HAVE STOPPED HIM SOONER... I SHOULD HAVE FRIED EVERY PIECE OF ELECTRONICS ON HIS YACHT WHEN I WENT AFTER HIM.

AND WHAT IF DOING THAT WOULD HAVE LAUNCHED THE TORPEDOES AUTOMATICALLY? CLARK, YOU CAN'T SPEND YOUR LIFE SECOND-GUESSING!

YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW LUTHOR'S MIND SET, AND YOU WERE RIGHT!

THAT DOESN'T BRING BACK DOWNTOWN METROPOUS.

NO... NO, IT DOESN'T. BUT THANKS TO YOU-- AND SUPERBOY AND SUPERGIRL-- MOST OF THE CITY IS STILL STANDING. AND YOU SAVED MILLIONS OF LIVES.



A LOT OF
THOSE PEOPLE ARE
NOW HOMELESS,
LOIS... AND WE'RE
AMONG THEM. TAKE
A LOOK AROUND
YOU--

--ALL THE
PLACES WHERE
WE LIVED AND
WORKED HAVE BEEN
DESTROYED. NOT EVEN
DOOMSDAY RAVAGED
METROPOLIS AS
BADLY AS LUTHOR'S
TORPEDOES.

I KNOW.
BUT THIS ISN'T
COAST CITY. *
METROPOLIS
CAN STILL BE
REBUILT.

YOU'RE
RIGHT.

SHE MUST BE
REBUILT... AND SHE
WILL BE! EVERY
BUILDING AND
STREET... EVERY-
THING! I PROMISE
YOU THAT!

I SEE
YOU'VE
ALREADY MADE
A START ON
THAT
PROMISE.

YES. IT TOOK
ME AWHILE, BUT
I WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO PIECE
IT BACK
TOGETHER...

* DESTROYED IN THE
LANDMARK SUPERMAN #80.

"...IT WAS SOMETHING I JUST HAD TO DO. PERRY TOLD ME ONCE, HOW MUCH JUST THE SIGHT OF THE PLANET GLOBE MEANT TO HIM... HOW MUCH IT'S MEANT TO SO MANY PEOPLE."

"THERE'S A LONG HARD ROAD AHEAD FOR US ALL NOW. I FIGURED WE COULD USE ALL THE SYMBOLS OF HOPE WE CAN FIND."

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty--

"-- and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

"... We cannot escape history. We... will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance can spare one or another of us."

"The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor to the last generation..."

"We shall nobly save or meanly lose the last, best hope of Earth."
--Abraham Lincoln, December 1, 1862

RE:ACTION

DC COMICS

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BOB ROZAKIS, Executive Director-Production

Dear DC:

Yessssssss! Doomsday is back! Be afraid, be very afraid. It was great to see Doomsday back on his feet again (so to speak) and I eagerly await the rematch between Superman and Doomsday. It's not wedding bells I hear for issue #700, it's the bell starting round two of the Doomsday/Superman battle. Am I right? Only time will tell. Issue #696 was fantastic and I like Superman in space, but I was glad at the end of the book to see Superman returning home. I love the idea of Superman having more power, as I feel that is the only way he's going to be able to defeat Doomsday in round two. This Champion figure was excellent, and Outpost seemed like an old, wise man. Keep up the good work.

Jeff Schwab
Clifton, NJ

Dear Superteam:

Re: ACTION COMICS #696

WOW!! It had it all. The action, the emotion, and the intensity that all great comic books are made of. Well, it's clear that since the resurrection, Superman has become substantially more powerful. It was unfortunate that Superman and Champion caused so much destruction because of a lack of communication. I think the Champion is awesome! He's just like Superman, so he deserves just as much publicity and admiration. Page 22 was unbelievable. It reminded me of the last page of SUPERMAN #78. The artwork of Denis Rodier and Jackson Guice was exceptional, and Roger Stern wrote a great story. Jackson Guice, I personally nominate you for artist of the year. I hope people come to recognize your great talent! So, to my fellow comics collectors, let's all give Jackson Guice a round of applause! CLAP CLAP CLAP!!

I have two questions that must be answered. 1. Since Doomsday is way out in space and he can't fly, what type of problem can he present to the earth in the future? 2. Will Champion get more publicity in Superman comics to come? Maybe a limited series?

In conclusion, I would like to say I love the art, I love the stories, I love it all! Long live DC! Hip hip hooray! Hip hip hooray!

Geoffrey Lund
Colebrook, CT

1. Maybe Doomsday can't get to Earth from his asteroid prison, Geoffrey, but things have a way of working out for the grey, spiked monster—observe issue #1 of SUPERMAN/DOOMSDAY: HUNTER/PREY and see what happens when you offer the wrong guy a lift. On sale now!

2. Glad you liked Champion—he's a great tragic figure, with superpowers to boot! There are no plans currently for more appearances by ol' Champ, but who knows? If enough people want it badly enough...



ACTION COMICS #696

Dear Superteam:

Extravagant work on ACTION COMICS #696 on the last page when you talk about Doomsday coming back some time. I also think we haven't seen the last of Hank Henshaw. What I mean is that warning device (in SUPERMAN #78) that he put on Doomsday—well, maybe when Superman was about to destroy Henshaw (SUPERMAN #82), Henshaw transferred his mental self into Doomsday through the warning device. Remember, Henshaw did say that somehow he'll survive.

Tom Burns
Harleyville, PA

Good news, Tom! First, you're right about how Henshaw, the Cyborg, survived! And to see just how right you are, pick up this month's first

issue of SUPERMAN/DOOMSDAY: HUNTER/PREY—part one of a three-part miniseries. And second, you didn't beg for a Baldy! So for just being right for right's sake, a Baldy is in fact yours! Write to us with your street address and reap the reward.

Editor:

ACTION COMICS #696 continues a trend in recent SUPERMAN comics: Superman gets into a fight arising out of situations he does not fully comprehend. I don't think I like this direction. Previously on this sojourn in space, he fights with the Sun Devils and Auron—people with whom Superman could, at one time, be allied. Now, he battles Champion, the sole defender of his world. The fight is unnecessary—nothing constructive is accomplished that could not have been achieved peacefully.

Champion's story seems like it could be an interesting one, but Outpost is very cagey about revealing any details about it. I would like to have seen them in a more vital—and heroic—role. At any rate, Outpost doesn't think they'll run into Superman again. The only thing that could go wrong with its prediction is Doomsday.

Doomsday's brief appearance overshadows any other action in this story. Little has been revealed about Doomsday, but it seems that Doomsday, tumbling out of the wormhole, is likely to encounter Champion, and I fear that Champion may not fare as well as Superman. If anything happens, you will keep me informed, right?

Randall MI Gee
San Jose, CA

Dear Re:ACTION:

In ACTION COMICS #696, it looks like Henshaw made another error. When he (as the Cyborg Superman) made his calculations for Doomsday's trajectory through unpopulated regions of the universe, he forgot space is unpredictable. That unpredictability was made evident by the wormhole Superman and Doomsday passed through in ACTION #696. I am guessing that when Doomsday passed through the wormhole, his path was altered and he will now be

carried into a populated region of the galaxy. I would not be surprised to see him crash on the Champion's Birthworld and trash it and Champion. I believe Doomsday will soon have something to destroy.

Kenneth Weaver
LeRoy, NY

Dear Roger and Mike:

While Superman's misunderstanding/brawl with Champion was fairly typical, I liked the inclusion of Outpost, about the first helpful entity on this cosmic three-day weekend. Perhaps his assistance was to their mutual benefit: by giving our hero directions back to Earth, Outpost rids Birthworld of a potential threat (Superman's rapidly increasing powers). Besides, now that you've established that world and its guardians as honorable and decent, you can have Doomsday rip the joint to shreds, just to keep in practice.

Joe Frank
Scottsdale, AZ

Shame on you, Joe, Kenneth, and Randall—you think we'd create a character as noble as Champion just to waste his planet with the monstrous Doomsday? (As a little guy around the SUPERMAN offices puts it, "Say, I wish I'd thought of that!")

Dear Re: ACTION:

Welcome back, Roger. Although your title was protected in Karl's very capable hands, it's good to see your name credited on the title once more. Your return trumpeted a tour de force of eloquent scripting as witnessed in the spectrum of Superman's very human emotions—from his frustration of this, his second "exile" into space, to his wonderment of Birthworld; fear in losing control of the powers once flawlessly harnessed; and eventually his excitement in finding the way home.

I'm not sure which storyline will prove more hazardous in the near future—Superman's increment of might or Lois tackling LexCorp again. In response to the first, his Eradicator-enhanced power trip might prove useful in the event of Doomsday's foreshadowed return, but through the mystical oracles of preordering, such an event won't occur until after this particular is solved.

Problem #2 has Lois attacking Lex a second time, while the insurance-fraud scam was hardly concluded! Lois's instinct for a front-page story is as strong as her magnet for danger; however, the red-headed Lex is just as ruthless as his "Father" and not a good enemy to have.

Joe Kucharski III
Haddon Heights, NJ

Dear Super-Dudes:

Issue #696 was yet another perfect example of what good comics were meant to be. The story was good, the action was good; what else could you want in an issue of ACTION COMICS? As for Champion, he was a wimp and you can tell him I said that. If that were a real fight, Superman would have torn his head off, he would smash him into dirt, he would have pounded his face into mulch, he would have... Anyway, that was a great issue. With all of Superman's new powers, am I right in predicting he's going to discover he has the ability to travel through time? Just a thought.

Andy Boswell
Yuba City, CA

Superman won't be able to travel through time, Andy, but, let's see, travel through time...travel through time...you might want to pay close attention to the DC Universe this summer. Just a thought.

Dear Re: ACTION:

Well, it looks as though Superman's deep space adventures are coming to an end, but not without a great finale. I have got to admit, I always look forward to the next issue of SUPERMAN, but ACTION #696 was more anticipated than usual. The story previews I have read for this issue were great—"Superman meets an ancient champion sworn to protect a dead world for all eternity..." and while I enjoyed the whole space saga, this was my favorite part. From the opening scene of a frustrated Superman kicking an asteroid, I knew this story would be a classic.

It was interesting that Superman's fight with the Champion was only a result of miscommunication (as is usually the case). It was easy to see how Superman's actions could be mistaken as malicious in the eyes of the Champion. Perhaps Doomsday wasn't intentionally destroying everything and everyone in his path, but was in fact just misunderstood (as is common with monsters). Okay, maybe not, but to the Champion, Superman seemed just as much a menace as Doomsday did.

Without hype or fanfare, Roger Stern and company have created a very memorable story. I am looking forward to the upcoming stories, which sound interesting (to say the least!) it looks as if Lex Luthor is in for a rough time, so why not give him a Baldy Award in light of his upcoming hair situation?

Christopher Good
Leesport, PA

Send Lex a Baldy? How about a Sickle? Or a Skinny? Nah—let's cut the guy a little break. Things aren't going so great for him these days...

—Chris Duffy
Nice to the bad guys

NEXT WEEK: In MAN OF STEEL #35, as Metropolitans are struggling to survive in a city in ruins, Superman faces off against Afterburn—a Luthor fail-safe that exists only to destroy what little is left! Meanwhile, a seemingly ordinary Metropolis mailman dreams of another city—a city of another world, called Dekotal Chaos and nightmares in seven days from Weezie, Bog, and Jenk! A Milestone for the Superman Universe!

IN TWO WEEKS: In SUPERMAN #91, along with Supes himself, you'll ponder the question: who's worse—gigantic, powerful Extermination Robots programmed by Luthor or greedy, opportunistic LexCorp financiers who refuse to help fellow citizens? This loaded question is hit head-on in fourteen days by Dan Jurgens, Brent Anderson, and Joe Rubinstein!

IN THREE WEEKS: In ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #514, Metropolis is hit by the most fearful of Luthor's fail-safes—and Superman must rush to save his loved ones! Meanwhile, Professor Hamilton lends a hand! Purple hearts at the door—brought to you in twenty-one days by Karl Kesel and guest artists Peter Krause and Ron McCain.

IN FOUR WEEKS: It's Superman in an all-out physical fight to the finish for his city against...Lex Luthor? That's right—but how is it possible? Luthor's last stand is an all-issue brawl featuring a special view inside Lex's mind and Luthor dressed to kill! This is it—Superman and Luthor throwing rubble at each other in just twenty-eight days in ACTION COMICS #701, by Karl Kesel, Jackson Guice, and Denis Rodier! Here's to the next fifty-six years!

Indiana Jones's got nothing on Superman as the Man of Steel moves Planets again (just like the old days) on this issue's anniversary cover, supplied by Jackson Guice and Suzanne Bourdages.

Sadly, this is Roger Stern's last Superman story for a while. Roger started writing for the SUPER titles 100 issues ago in ACTION #600 (that's 6 years ago in real time) followed by a SUPERMAN annual, every Supes story for ACTION COMICS WEEKLY, ten issues on SUPERMAN, and then ACTION COMICS #644-700. During his ground-breaking run, Roger notably wrote the wickedest Lex Luthor in "Super" town—and became the man who controlled the man who controlled Metropolis. Fittingly, his last issue of ACTION for a while ushers in a new phase for Superman's arch-enemy. Notice we're not saying his last last issue. Luthor's fail-safes will plague Metropolis for awhile, then go away, but our fail-safe, Roger Stern, is not going to disappear. So long, Roger. See you soon.

They call him charming... *Beast Charming.*

